

Community Health Worker 2016 Evaluation Survey



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

**Texas Department of State
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
Executive Summary	1
Introduction.....	3
Background and Development.....	3
Implementation and Dissemination	3
Number of Completed Surveys/Return Rate.....	4
Survey Findings	5
How Experienced Are Texas CHWs?	5
Do Texas CHWs Value Certification?	6
Why Do Texas CHWs Keep Their Certification?.....	9
Do Employers Require CHW Certification?	10
Do CHWs Plan to Renew their CHW Certification?	11
Comments.....	12
Advocacy/Awareness/Professionalism	12
Employment	13
Training and Renewal.....	13
Challenges	14
Conclusions.....	14
Appendix A: CHW/Promotor(a) Evaluation Survey...	15

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2015, the Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker (CHW) Training and Certification Advisory Committee began surveying CHWs' perspectives on the benefits and challenges of certification. The survey was disseminated by email and mail in 2015 and again in 2016 to CHWs whose certification was due to expire in 2016. The 2016 evaluation survey results are included in this report. Throughout this report, the terms "Spanish speakers" and "English speakers" refer to the language version respondents used to complete the survey. Also, "promotores" and "community health workers" are used interchangeably and are both considered CHWs.

Survey Findings

Many survey respondents have considerable experience as a CHW; about 13 percent of English speakers and 21 percent of Spanish speakers have been a CHW for more than 11 years.

More than 90 percent of respondents (90 percent – English speakers; 98 percent Spanish speakers) indicated that they felt their certification is meaningful or valuable. Most respondents noted the value of certification as it increases self-confidence, makes a difference in the community, and gives value to the CHW profession. Respondents pointed to a lack of job opportunities as a primary reason why certification may not be considered valuable.

About 40 percent of English speakers indicated that their employers required CHW certification, compared with 45 percent of Spanish speakers. This represents a change from the 2015 Evaluation Survey results when 35 percent of English speakers indicated that their employers required CHW certification, compared with 52 percent of Spanish speakers.

Survey Implementation

Implemented

January – December
2016

Surveys Disseminated

1,488 English surveys
341 Spanish surveys

Target Respondents

Individuals whose CHW
certification renewal was
due in 2016

Completed Surveys

English - 342
Completion rate = 23
percent

Spanish - 98
Completion rate = 29
percent

A very high percentage of respondents indicated that they planned to renew their CHW certification (94 percent of English speakers and 97 percent of Spanish speakers.)

Similar to the 2015 survey, there were significantly fewer responses from CHWs who did not renew their certifications as more than 750 certifications expired in 2016.

Conclusion

The CHW 2016 Evaluation Survey continued to provide valuable information for the Advisory Committee and DSHS as they continued to explore ways to improve the Program, CHW renewal, and overall survey return rates. In 2017, the Advisory Committee's Training and Certification Workgroup will refine or revise the focus of survey for implementation in 2018.

Introduction

DSHS oversees the statewide certification and training program for community health workers (CHWs), also known as promotores, under Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 48. DSHS also collects and reports data through the Annual Report of the Promotor(a) or CHW Training and Certification Advisory Committee, including training information and the number and demographics of certified CHWs and instructors.

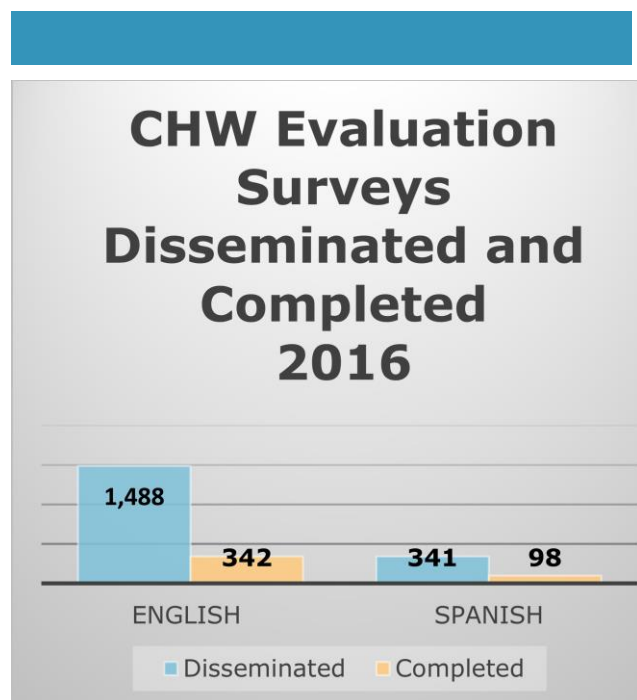
Background and Development

The Promotor(a) or CHW Training and Certification Advisory Committee developed questions for a survey to explore CHWs' perspectives on the benefits and challenges of certification. The survey was implemented in 2015 and again in 2016.

Implementation and Dissemination

The survey, available in English and Spanish, may be completed online or on paper. DSHS disseminated the survey throughout the year, beginning in January 2016 to CHWs whose certification renewal was due in 2016. DSHS disseminated surveys in English or Spanish based on CHWs' preferred language for correspondence. Most CHWs request correspondence in English. Throughout this report, respondents who completed the survey in Spanish are referred to as "Spanish speakers" and respondents who completed the survey in English are referred to as "English speakers." Also, "promotores" and "community health workers" are used interchangeably and are both considered CHWs.

DSHS emailed a letter to CHWs that included an overview of the survey's background, development and purpose, a link to the survey, and program contact information for questions. CHWs without a valid



email address on record were mailed a copy of the letter and survey and a postage-paid return envelope. DSHS sent reminder emails or mailed packets in April, July and October 2016 to encourage CHWs to complete the survey.

Number of Completed Surveys/Return Rate

DSHS received 342 completed English surveys (314 surveys online and 28 by mail) and 98 completed Spanish surveys (76 surveys online and 22 by mail).

An additional 60 individuals started the English survey online but did not complete it and 17 individuals started the Spanish survey online but did not complete it. This resulted in an incompleteness rate of approximately 15 percent for each survey. Data indicated that individuals completed the online English survey in an average of six minutes, while individuals completing the Spanish survey did so in an average of ten minutes.

Most respondents completed the online survey using a computer (English – 82 percent, Spanish – 74 percent). Approximately 17 – 23 percent of respondents used a Smartphone to complete the survey.

The survey completion rate improved in 2016 as compared to 2015, when 18% of English surveys and 20% of Spanish surveys were completed.

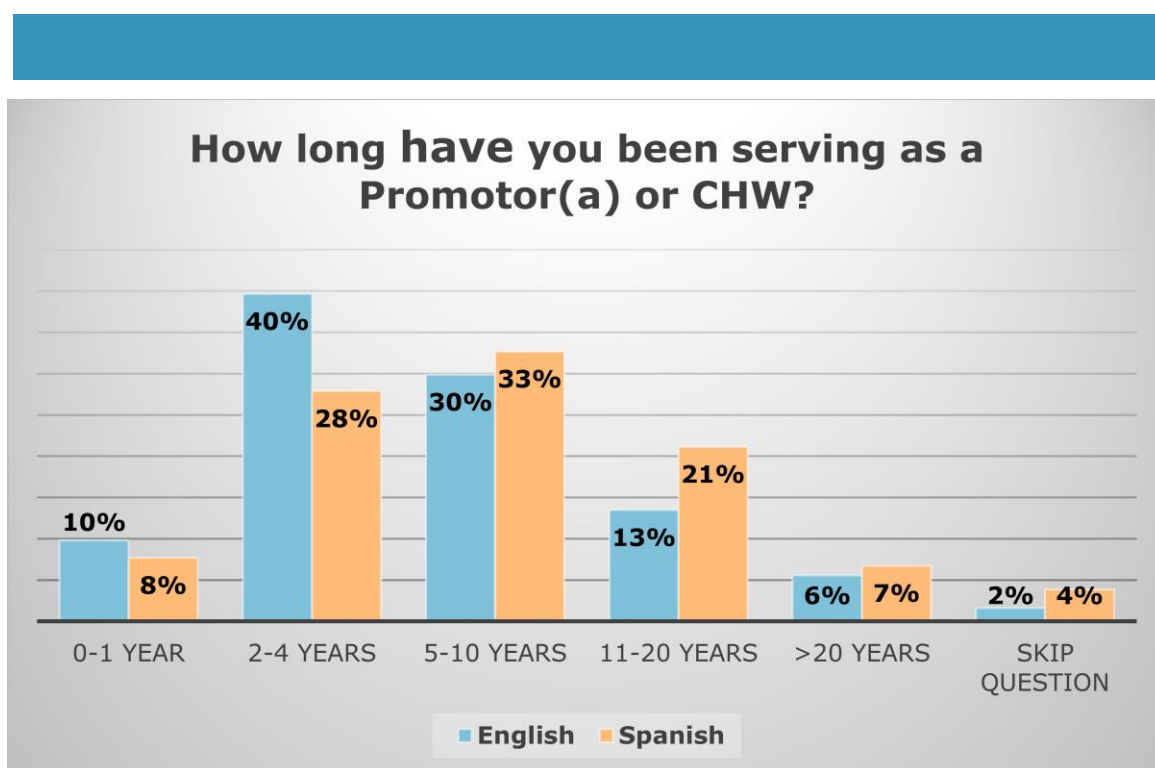
Survey Completion Rates

English – 23%
Spanish – 29%

Survey Findings

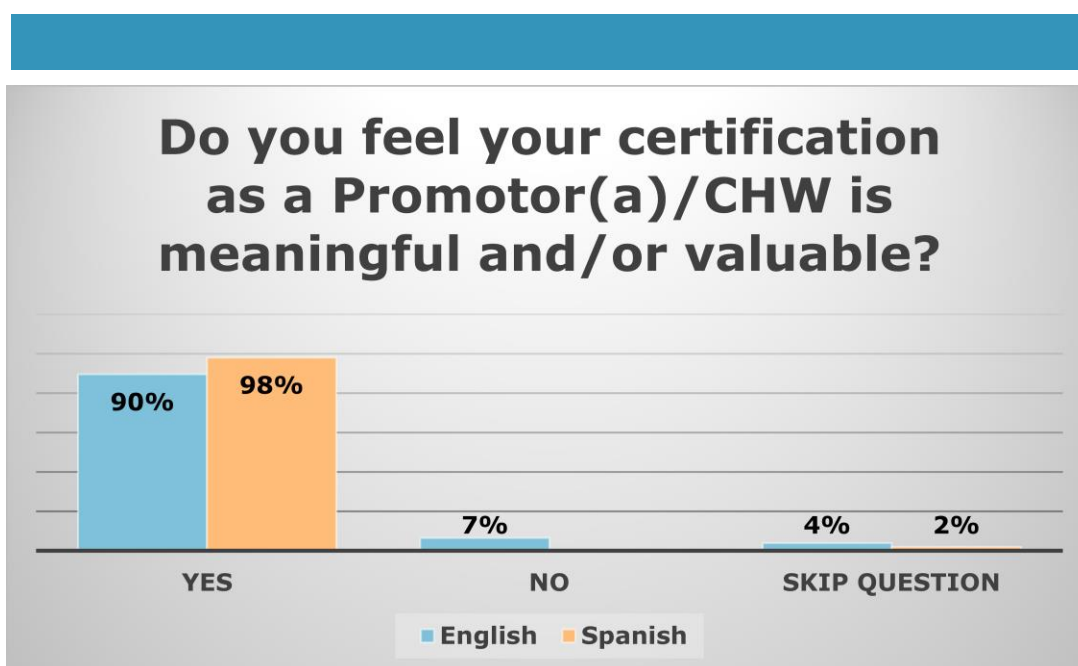
How Experienced Are Texas CHWs?

The survey asked CHWs about their experience serving as a CHW. Many survey respondents have considerable experience as a CHW. Approximately 30 percent of English speakers have 5 to 10 years of experience as compared with 33 percent of Spanish speakers. About 13 percent of English speakers indicated they have been a CHW for more than 11 years, as compared to 21 percent of Spanish speakers.

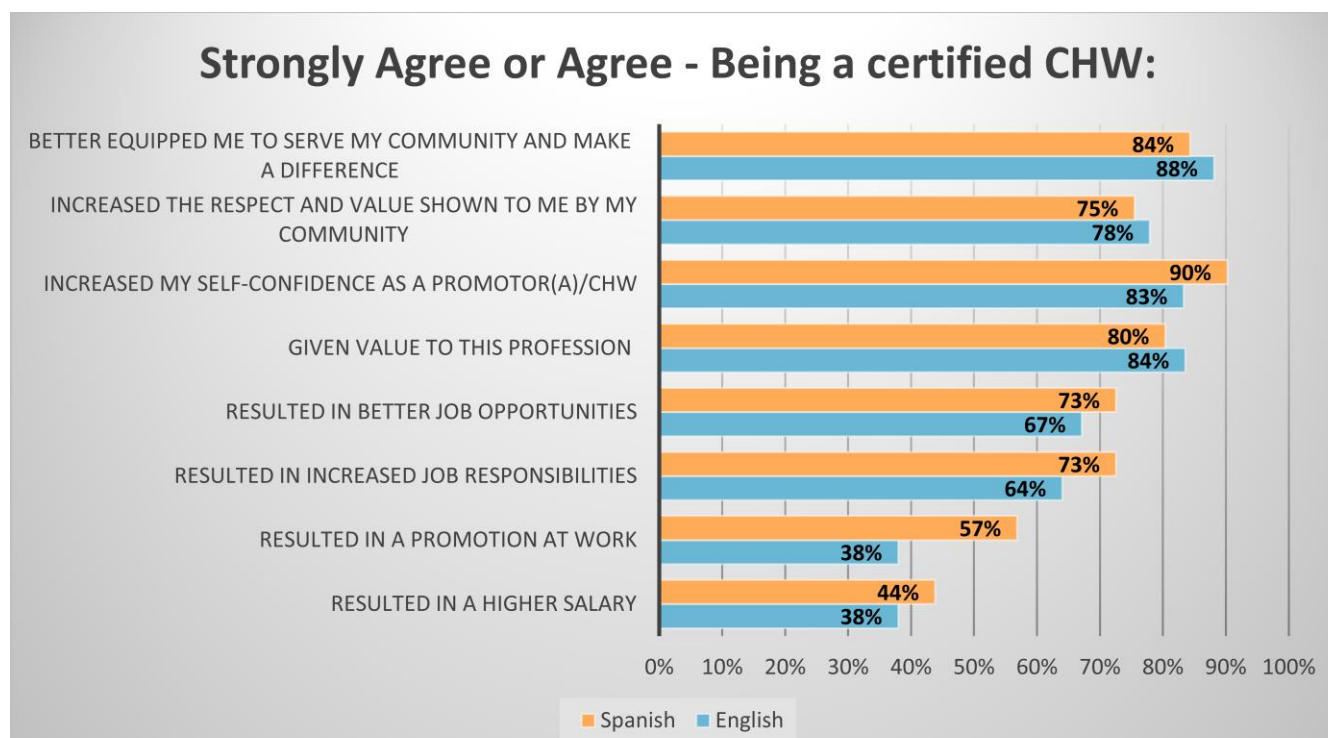


Do Texas CHWs Value Certification?

The survey asked respondents if they feel that their certification as a Promotor(a) or CHW is meaningful or valuable. More than 90 percent of respondents (90 percent - English survey; 98 percent - Spanish survey) indicated that they felt their certification is meaningful or valuable. The results are similar to those of the 2015 survey indicating that respondents continue to value CHW certification.



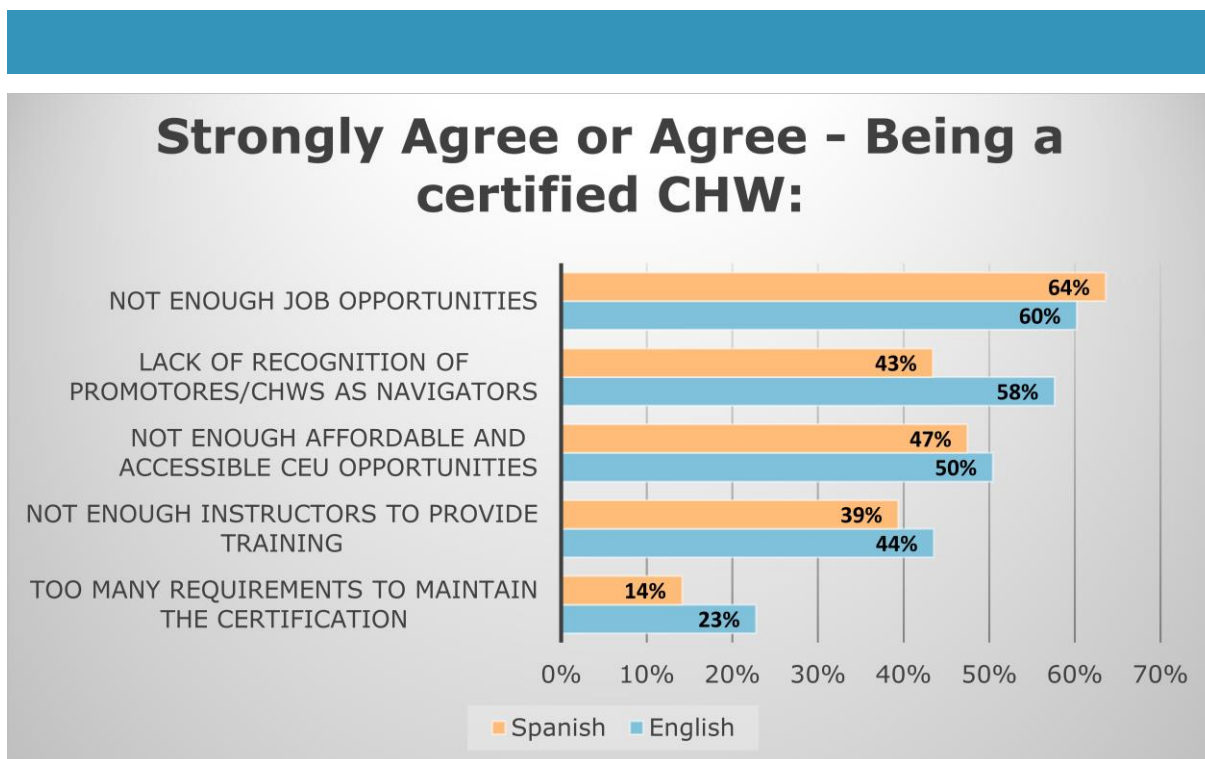
The survey included questions about why a Promotor(a)/CHW might feel, think, or believe certification is meaningful and/or valuable.



The most popular statements were related to increasing self-confidence, making a difference in the community, and giving value to the CHW profession.

Only 38 percent of English speakers agreed or strongly agreed that their CHW certification had resulted in a work promotion or higher salary; although, 67 percent agreed or strongly agreed that CHW certification had resulted in better job opportunities. Over 70 percent of Spanish speakers agreed or strongly agreed that CHW certification had resulted in better job opportunities, but a lower percentage agreed or strongly agreed that CHW certification had resulted in a work promotion or higher salary (57 percent and 44 percent respectively).

The survey also asked why a CHW might not feel, think, or believe certification is meaningful and/or valuable.



Approximately 60 percent of CHWs agreed or strongly agreed with statements related to not enough job opportunities and nearly half felt that there were not enough affordable and accessible continuing education unit (CEU) opportunities.

Fewer respondents (14-23 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that there are too many requirements to maintain CHW certification.

Why Do Texas CHWs Keep Their Certification?

Approximately 90 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that maintaining their CHW certification provides for personal growth and satisfaction, helps to keep up with the latest health information and improves their role in the community as a point of contact.

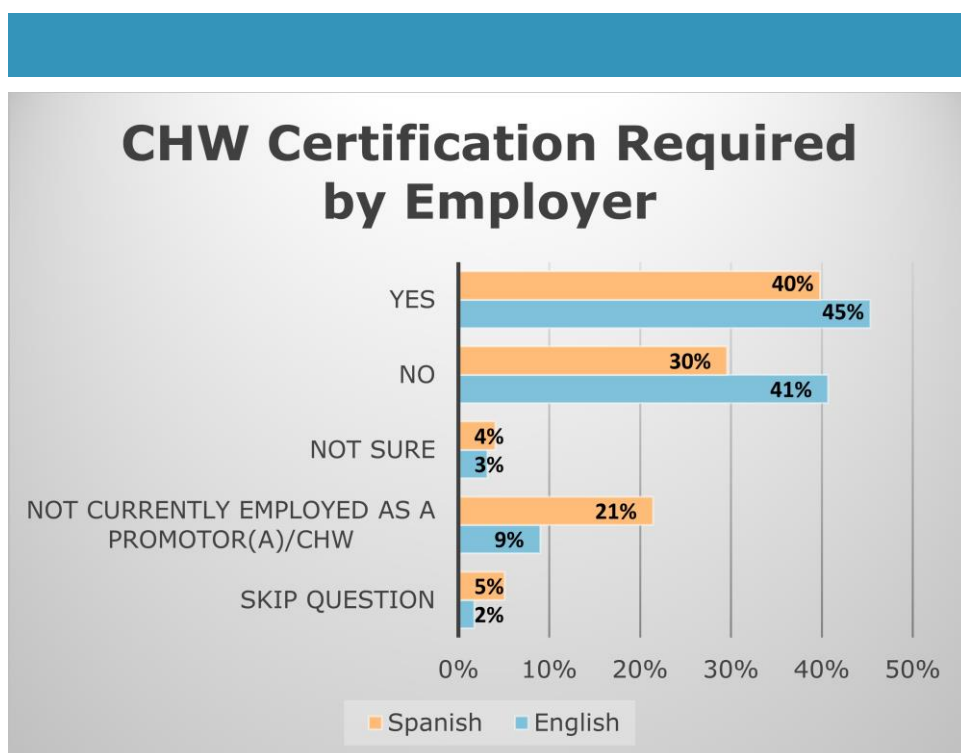
Reasons for maintaining my CHW certification:



Do Employers Require CHW Certification?

Not all employers require certification. Of respondents who completed the English survey, 45 percent indicated that their employer requires that they be certified, an increase from 35% in the 2015 survey results. For Spanish speakers, it was 40 percent, a decrease from 52% in the 2015 survey results.

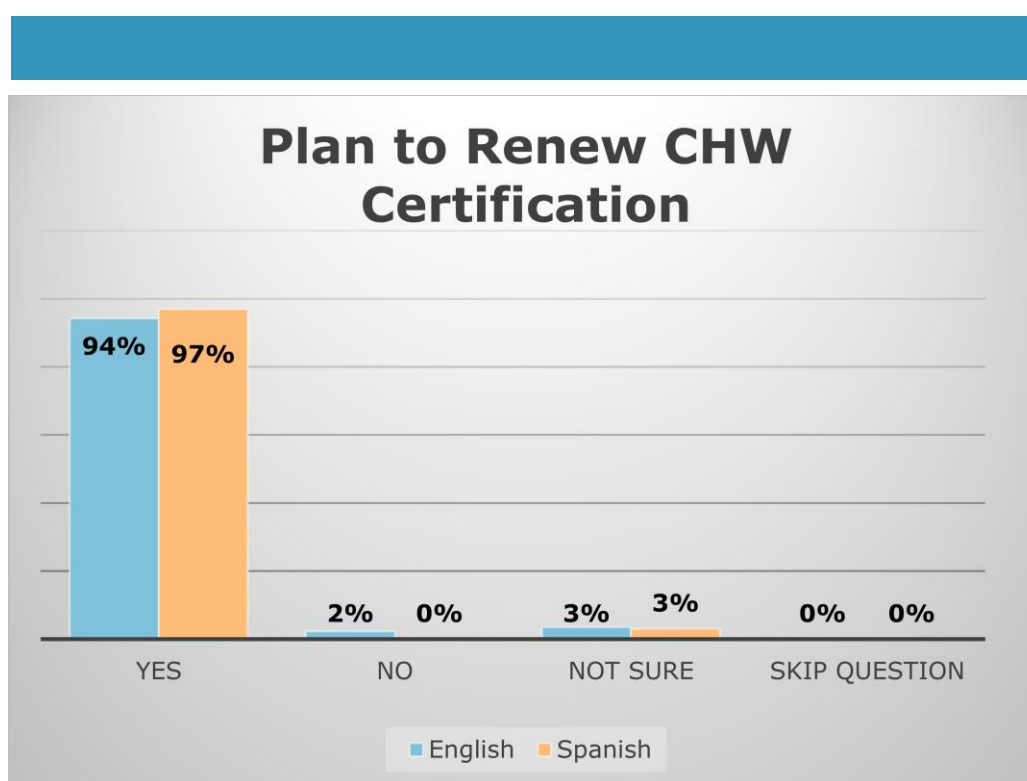
More Spanish speakers indicated that they are not currently employed as a promotor(a) or CHW than English speakers (9 percent - English survey; 21 percent - Spanish survey).



Do CHWs Plan to Renew their CHW Certification?

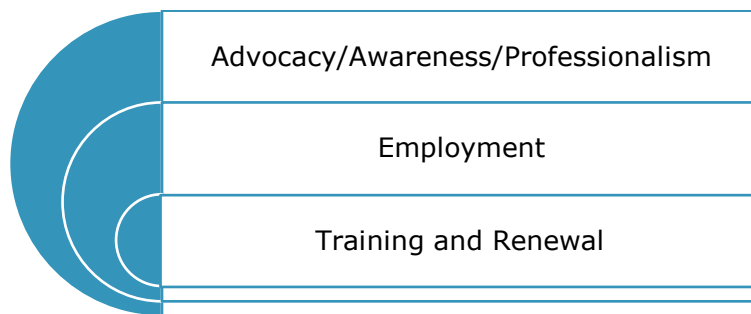
A very high percentage of respondents indicated that they planned to renew their CHW certification (94 percent English speakers and 97 percent of Spanish speakers.)

For the 20 English speakers and 3 Spanish speakers who responded “No” or “Not Sure”, the majority agreed or strongly agreed that certification did not lead to more employment opportunities, a work promotion, or more professional recognition.



Comments

Survey respondents provided comments that fell into one or more of the following categories:



Advocacy/Awareness/Professionalism

Similar to the 2015 survey, respondents emphasized several factors related to advocacy, awareness and professionalism. Many expressed pride and shared positive experiences regarding what CHW certification has meant to them personally by increasing their knowledge and bringing value to their lives and communities. Many respondents noted the trusting relationship CHWs have with their communities and emphasized the benefit of the CHW workforce for these communities and employers.

"It is important to have the CHW certification, especially because the community members feel more confident when we communicate health education and resources to them."

A small number of 2016 survey responses continued to indicate that there is still a need to further the awareness with other professionals, including physicians and the healthcare field and community leaders.

"CHWs are not well known in West Texas. I would like to see the local CHW coalition be more active in the communities served so that the profession could become more well known. "

Respondents also felt that certification was valuable for increasing respect for the CHW profession and increasing self-confidence and knowledge/tools to assist others in their communities. Others noted the importance of networking with other CHWs, including through a local or regional CHW association.

"For me to be a promoter of health gives me pride because it comes from the heart."

Employment

Many respondents expressed concerns about limited employment opportunities for CHWs as well as a lack of promotion or increased salary. Some noted that maintaining certified CHWs is a challenge because of limited employment options. Several respondents indicated that some community organizations continue to view CHWs as volunteers rather than potential paid employees.

"There is much to do in Hispanic communities, but there is not always the opportunity for promotores - they want it to be voluntary without a salary or for very low wages."

Training and Renewal

A few respondents commented that the certification process was challenging due to the application process and timeframe for approval. Some respondents expressed a need for more training in Spanish and

"Trainers must be educated more in cultures besides themselves [their own] to be able to educate the audience. Although we speak the same language, different cultures have different forms of communication."

"The important thing is to educate ourselves more to help the community (different parts of the community, like church and work, and out in the field)."

low-cost or free continuing education events near them, while others commented positively on available online modules. One respondent noted that there are many opportunities for CEUs but some CHWs may not follow through to obtain the continuing education.

Challenges

There were a greater number of responses to the 2016 survey than the 2015 survey. However, once again, survey responses appear to have been very limited from CHWs who did not renew their certifications as more than 848 certifications expired in 2016. Of the 342 completed English surveys, only five percent indicated that they did not plan to renew or were unsure if they would renew. Similarly, only three percent of completed Spanish surveys indicated that the respondent were not sure if they would renew their CHW certification.

DSHS reached out to CHWs whose certification expired in 2016 to encourage these individuals to complete a survey. One challenge was that many emails bounced back and mailed surveys were sometimes returned as undeliverable.

Conclusions

The 2016 CHW Evaluation Surveys gave CHWs opportunities to share their valuable information and insight for the Promotor(a)/CHW Training and Certification Advisory Committee and DSHS to refine the program to better serve the needs of CHWs in addition to the people they serve. DSHS will disseminate the CHW Evaluation Survey in 2017.

In 2017, the Advisory Committee's Training and Certification Workgroup will assess and determine the focus of survey for implementation in 2018 and continue to explore opportunities to improve response rates.

Appendix A: CHW/Promotor(a) Evaluation Survey

Instructions:

In order to improve the CHW/Promotor(a) certification process in Texas, please take a few minutes to complete this short survey. Your responses will be anonymous, and your responses WILL NOT affect your recertification or status as a certified CHW/Promotor(a) in Texas. This information will help us understand how you benefit or do not benefit from being a certified CHW/Promotor(a).

Please return your survey in the postage-paid return envelope.

Please email chw@dshs.texas.gov or call 512-776-2570 if you have any questions about the survey.

Years of experience as a Promotor(a)/CHW

1. How long have you been serving as a Promotor(a)/CHW (including all full-time, part-time, or volunteer experience)? Please select one:

- ☐ 0-1 year
- ☐ 2-4 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-20 years
- ☐ Over 20 years
- ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

2. How long have you been serving in the role of a certified Promotor(a)/CHW? Please select one:

- ☐ 0-1 year
- ☐ 2-4 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ Over 10 years
- ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

Certification

3. Do you feel your certification as a Promotor(a)/CHW is meaningful and/or valuable?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Skip question. Prefer Not to Answer

4. The following statements are about why a Promotor(a)/CHW might feel, think, or believe certification is meaningful and/or valuable. Please select your response to each statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer Not to Answer
a. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has better equipped me to serve my community and make a difference in the community I serve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has increased the respect and value shown to me by my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has increased my self-confidence as a Promotor(a)/CHW.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW gives value to this profession (other professionals acknowledge my work as a certified Promotor(a)/CHW).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has resulted in better job opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has resulted in increased job responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has resulted in a promotion at work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Being a certified Promotor(a)/CHW has resulted in a higher salary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Please write any additional comments pertaining to question #4 here.

6. The following statements are about why a Promotor(a)/CHW might not feel, think, or believe certification is meaningful and/or valuable. Please select your response to each statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer Not to Answer
a. Too many requirements to maintain the certification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Lack of recognition of Promotores/CHWs as navigators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Not enough job opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Not enough Instructors to provide training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Not enough affordable and accessible CEU opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Please write any additional comments pertaining to question #6 here.

8. Why do you maintain your Promotor(a)/CHW certification? Select your response to each statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer Not to Answer
a. Required by employer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Personal growth/satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. To open up more employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. To increase my salary range	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. For professional recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. To keep up with latest health information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. To improve my role in the community as a point of contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Please write any additional comments pertaining to question #8 here.

10. Does your employer require you to be a certified Promotor(a)/CHW?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

☐ Not currently employed as a Promotor(a)/CHW

☐ Prefer Not to Answer.

11. Do you plan to renew your Promotor(a)/CHW certification?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

☐ Prefer Not to Answer.

12. If you checked “No” or “Not sure”, please select your response to each statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer Not to Answer
a. Did not open up more employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Did not lead to promotion at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Did not lead to increase in salary range	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Did not result in professional recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Not enough affordable and accessible CEU opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Please write any additional comments pertaining to question #12 here.

14. Additional comments regarding Promotor(a)/CHW certification and/or recertification.

Thank you for completing this survey!